

## PART IV – PROCESSES WITH PARENTS

### Section 4.1 – Application and Receipt of Child Care Services

*The following describes the process for a family to apply for/receive child care services. (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through(e)) If the process varies for families based on eligibility category, for instance, TANF versus non-TANF, please describe. The description should include:*

- *How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and of available child care options;*
- *Where/how applications are made;*
- *Who makes the eligibility determination;*
- *How parents who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in Section 4.4; and*
- *Length of eligibility including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or prekindergarten programs.*

#### **States Use Technology to Help Parents Access Child Care Subsidies**

Increasingly, States use the Internet, e-mail and other information technology to disseminate child care information, to allow parents or providers to estimate eligibility, and even to request and/or complete an application for subsidized service, sometimes without an in-person interview.

#### **Promoting Awareness of Child Care Subsidies**

States use a variety of methods to inform parents about child care subsidies. All States reported that they provide information on the availability of child care at the point of intake for families applying for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Additional strategies for informing parents about child care subsidies are highlighted below and summarized in Table 4.1 on page 107.

- Forty-three Lead Agencies (AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, DC, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MN, MS, MO, MT, NV, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, PR, RI, SC, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY) reported that they use child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) to provide information to families about the availability of child care subsidies and the types of child care programs available to families.
- Child care centers and homes also help to inform parents about child care subsidies. Twenty-four States (AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, DC, ID, IL, IA, LA, MD, MA, MN, MT, NE,

NC, OK, PA, RI, SC, TX, UT, WA, WV) reported that providers were part of their outreach efforts.

- Twenty-eight States (AK, CA, CO, CT, DC, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, MA, MN, MT, ND, OH, OK, PA, PR, SD, TN, TX, UT, WA, WV, WI, WY) indicated that they had developed brochures, flyers, and other promotional materials to inform families about child care subsidies. These materials are typically available at the various offices where families apply for public assistance and may also be distributed by community agencies, Head Start and other child care providers, employment and training centers, and CCR&Rs.
- Sixteen Lead Agencies (AR, CA, DC, KY, LA, MA, MT, NE, NV, ND, PA, PR, SD, TX, UT, WV) reported that they use print media, radio, and/or television to distribute information about child care subsidies.
- Fourteen States (AK, AR, CA, DC, ID, LA, MA, MT, NC, OH, OK, SD, WV, WY) reported that they provide information about child care subsidies on their Web sites. Some States include application forms. In the 2000-2001 Plans, five States (AK, MA, NC, OH, SD) used the Web in this way.

Parents in **Alaska** with incomes up to 85 percent of State Median Income and who need child care services may learn of available options from their local administrator, within the State's child care assistance program, or the regional resource and referral agency. The State Lead Agency also maintains information on its Web site, including a listing of licensed and exempt child care providers. The south-central resource and referral agency, Child Care Connection, maintains an office in the Anchorage Job Center, and all resource and referral agencies as well as child care assistance grantees maintain a working relationship with local job centers (Alaska's version of One Stops), where those exist, to allow parents access to child care information.

The **District of Columbia** Office of Early Childhood Development uses a variety of strategies to inform, educate, and refer parents with regard to available child care. The office supports child care resource and referral services for parents through a contractual arrangement; provides services to parents at all TANF intake points; offers child care intake at two mobile eligibility sites; and provides on-site intake for children at new vendor locations.

**Nevada** parents are informed of the availability of child care services in a variety of ways. The print media is used as well as television and radio. As an example, the Economic Opportunity Board, the voucher management agency in southern Nevada, owns its own radio station and has regular programs concerning child care. Representatives of the Children's Cabinet, the voucher management agency in northern Nevada, are being interviewed on television on a somewhat regular basis. Both organizations maintain resource and referral capabilities to provide parents with a full range of child care options.

Parents receive information about **Washington's** Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program (and other child care subsidies available through a continuum of services) through their local Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) office, resource and referral agency, child care provider, Seasonal Child Care, Homeless Child Care, or other community agencies. Posters and brochures are available in six languages publicizing the availability of these services. Parents are informed of their options through DSHS workers, resource and referral agencies, brochures, and child care providers (including the Head Start–Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program and Seasonal Child Care Program).

<b>TABLE 4.1 – PROMOTING AWARENESS OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES</b>			
<b>How States Inform Parents</b>	<b>States Reporting 2000-2001 Plans</b>	<b>States Reporting 2002-2003 Plans</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Use CCR&amp;Rs</b>	34	43	+ 9
<b>Use Providers</b>	20	24	+ 4
<b>Use Brochures, etc.</b>	18	28	+ 10
<b>Use Print Media, Radio, Television</b>	6	16	+ 10
<b>Use the Web</b>	5	14	+ 9

*Source:* Information compiled from State CCDF Plans, FFY 2002-2003.

### ***Where and How Families Apply***

States have established various ways for parents to apply for child care. Most typically, parents apply in person at the Lead Agency or the State or local agency responsible for administering TANF (which in some States also is the Lead Agency). A number of States have chosen to contract with an outside agency to assist with the application process. Fourteen States have established procedures that allow families to apply for child care assistance via mail, phone, or fax, and nearly half of the States use the Internet to perform application functions.

- Eleven States (AL, IL, IN, ME, MA, MS, NV, NJ, TX, VT, WV) reported that they use a voucher management agency (or other local designee) to determine eligibility for child care assistance. Eight States (IA, LA, MD, MN, NY, ND, OH, VA) reported that State or county staff determine eligibility for child care assistance at county agency offices.
- Ten States (AK, CA, CO, HI, KY, MA, NH, NC, PA, WA) use a combination of voucher management agencies and State agency staff to determine eligibility for child care assistance. In most of these cases, the voucher management agency (or agencies) operates only in some counties or only with certain populations.

Applications are made at local counties in **Colorado**. In a few counties, the resource and referral agency provides intake and application services. Counties with Head Start programs may accept the Head Start application in lieu of the low-income child care application for those children enrolled in the Head Start program. In addition, Head Start eligibility and redetermination criteria may be applied to dually eligible Head Start/Low-Income Child Care families. For families ending their participation in the Colorado Works Program due to employment or training, a low-income child care application is

not required until after the first six months. Initial eligibility information is obtained from the Colorado Works Program. These families are still required to complete and sign a client responsibility form.

Parents can apply at extended hours sites at a **District of Columbia** Government one-stop services center. TANF participants can apply at the sites of the 10 TANF vendors to whom they have been referred. At Charter Schools and other programs with children already enrolled who meet the eligibility requirements that sign provider agreements to participate in the child care subsidy program, parent applications and eligibility determinations are conducted on-site. The Office of Early Childhood Development provides “mobile” application sites at places in the community where there is a request for such a service.

Applications for the **Idaho** Child Care Program are available at department offices Statewide. Applications can also be requested over the telephone, by mail, or printed as a PDF file from the department’s Internet site. Application materials include a cover letter explaining the program and how to apply, the application, the declaration of citizenship/alien status form, and verification checklist, which describes documents needed to verify circumstances.

The CCR&Rs determine eligibility for non-TANF child care services and help families locate child care providers in **Montana**.

The **New Hampshire** Department of Health and Human Services has invested in making its 12 District Offices where child care eligibility is determined more child and family friendly. Engaging, developmentally appropriate materials and chairs have been added to lobbies; facilities for changing diapers have been added to client bathrooms; washable “upholstered” furniture has been added to family rooms; and crayons and paper as well as books are available for children who accompany their parents into the interview rooms.

In **Pennsylvania**, the Department of Public Welfare’s parent-choice subsidized child care program is managed through the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies for non-TANF and through the County Assistance Office (CAO) for TANF clients.

Families in **South Carolina** apply for special needs child care services through the State Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, which determines their eligibility for services. Families apply for before- and after-school child care services through their local school under the grant administered by the State Department of Education, and the local schools determine eligibility for the program.

With the exception of Head Start/Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program and Seasonal Child Care Program (where contractors conduct eligibility functions), eligibility determinations are made at the local Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) office in **Washington** State. In January 2001, the Community Services Division implemented a new Child Care Call Center in Yakima. Low-income working families in that region of the State can now call a toll-free number to apply for subsidized child care

or get information on local child care resources. Families currently receiving help through the Working Connections Child Care Program can also call this number to report changes in their circumstances. Other Call Centers are being developed across the State to improve service delivery efficiencies.

The six CCR&R agencies in **West Virginia** are responsible for determination of eligibility, using the Lead Agency's management information system, the Family and Children's Tracking System (FACTS). Department of Health and Human Resources Family Support Staff and CCR&R agencies have developed referral systems to exchange information regarding receipt of TANF and participation in approved work activities under WV WORKS programs. The Lead Agency anticipates that the FACTS system may be used in the future, once adequate interfaces with other systems are established.

- Twenty-four Lead Agencies (AK, AZ, AR, CA, CT, ID, IL, KS, ME, MA, MS, MO, NV, ND, OK, OR, SC, SD, TN, TX, VT, WA, WV, WY) allow families to request applications for child care subsidies via mail or telephone.
- Fourteen States allow parents to complete the application for child care subsidies via mail and/or telephone (AK, AR, CA, CT, ID, IL, NV, ND, OR, SC, SD, TN, VT, WA). In several of these States, it appears that a face-to-face interview is not required.
- Four States (AR, ID, MA, TN) allow parents to request an application for subsidized child care via e-mail. No State reported permitting parents to complete the application via e-mail.
- Four States (AR, ID, RI, SD) reported making application forms and information available on their Web sites. **Illinois** reported that an online application is in-process.

A toll-free number also is available to assist **South Dakota** families and providers with their questions and concerns. An application can also be requested or downloaded on the Child Care Services Web site. In the future, applicants will be able to complete and submit applications online through the Child Care Services Web site.

- Five States (ID, IL, MA, RI, SD) report they make available an online tool for estimating eligibility for child care assistance.

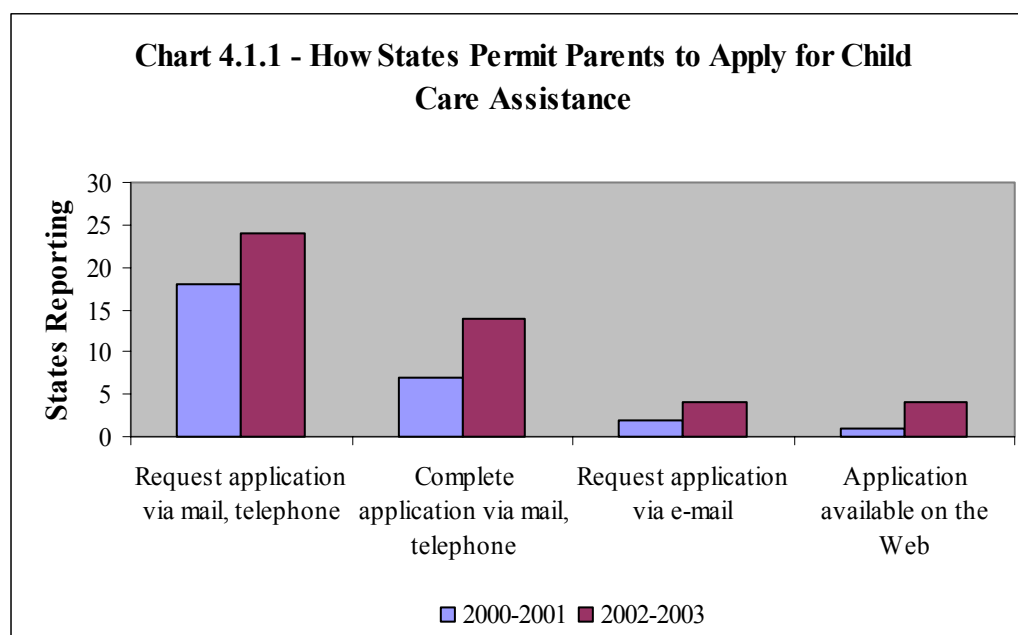
The **Illinois** Department of Human Services has an eligibility calculator on its Web site. Clients can enter their salary, number of persons in family, supplemental income, and the county where they live and the calculator will determine if the family qualifies for child care. The department is in the process of developing an application to download from the Web site for the client's use.

The **Massachusetts** Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) has developed a Web site (<http://www.qualitychildcare.org>) that helps families easily access information about their child care options. Families can search for a list of all the licensed child care providers in their area by the type of care provided (e.g., family child care homes, group

day care centers, etc.). In Fiscal Year 2002, the Web site will contain an “eligibility wizard” that will permit families to estimate whether they are eligible to access a child care subsidy. It also contains OCCS’ child care regulations and will include information about special programs.

It appears that child care providers themselves, both regulated and nonregulated, form the best network for informing parents of the child care subsidy program. Often it is a provider who may refer a client to the **Rhode Island** Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS sponsored numerous training sessions in the last year. Covered in these sessions were the basic rules of the Child Care Assistance Program, such as income level guidelines, provider and parental eligibility requirements, etc.; most recently, training covered the new Web enrollment process to conform to the latest changes in the regulations.

As shown in Chart 4.1.1 below, increasingly States are making it possible for families to apply for child care assistance using mail, telephone, e-mail and the Internet.



Source: Information compiled from State CCDF Plans, FFY 2002-2003.

### ***Length of Eligibility***

In most States, once initial eligibility has been determined, families continue to receive child care assistance as long as they continue to meet the State’s eligibility criteria. However, child care payments typically are authorized for six or 12 months, after which time the Lead Agency or its designee reviews the family circumstances to ensure that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria. Kentucky’s process is fairly typical:

The **Kentucky** Children’s Cabinet or Service Agent (one of the local agencies with which the Cabinet contracts for operation of the subsidy system) will determine eligibility for services based on criteria set forth in their Plan. Once issued, the certificate remains

in effect until the family's eligibility changes. Eligibility shall be redetermined annually or when circumstances change that impact the certificate. Such changes include:

- Use of a different provider;
- Changes in rates charged by providers;
- Changes in the level and amount of care needed; or
- Change of family income.

Increasingly, States have sought to lengthen the child care subsidy authorization period, in some cases synchronizing it with the Head Start or prekindergarten enrollment period, to promote early care and education collaborative partnerships. Chart 4.1.2 on page 112 illustrates the length of child care authorization payment periods.

- Twenty-eight States (AL, AR, CO,<sup>11</sup> CT,<sup>12</sup> DC, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, ME, MA, MN, MT, NV,<sup>13</sup> NH, NM, PA,<sup>14</sup> RI,<sup>15</sup> SD, TX,<sup>16</sup> UT, VT, WA, WV, WI, WY) generally authorize child care payments for six months.

Child care resource and referral agencies in **Montana** prospect a family's eligibility (150 percent of Federal poverty guideline) and issue a child care certification plan for up to six months. Certification plans may be shorter if prospective eligibility determination predicts a change in the family's circumstances that affects their basic eligibility. Families are eligible for non-TANF child care services for the entire six-month period, until one of the following occurs:

- A family enters the TANF program.
- Household composition changes, eliminating the need for child care.
- Earnings exceed the limits of the sliding fee scale, when the family re-certifies.
- Work hours decrease and cause a family to fall below the minimum work requirements (120 hours per month for two parent family, 60 hours per month for single-parent family or 40 hours per month for a single parent attending school full-time).
- A teen student-parent leaves high school.
- Unemployment continues past the grace period (the end of the following month).

Families who lose employment continue to receive benefits until the end of the following month. This grace period allows families to look for employment while providing children with continuity of care.

Child care eligibility is for a six-month period of time in **Wisconsin**. A review is required at the end of each six-month period to determine continuing eligibility. If a family has a change in circumstances of the household, this information must be reported within 10 days to the agency worker. Change in circumstance includes changes in earned or

---

<sup>11</sup> For children enrolled in Head Start under the Consolidated Child Care Pilot Program, 12 months.

<sup>12</sup> Or on a month-to-month basis, if warranted.

<sup>13</sup> Or as often as monthly if family income is unstable; for care purchased through a contract, as in before- and after-school programs, eligibility is redetermined once each year.

<sup>14</sup> Unless circumstances warrant a shorter period.

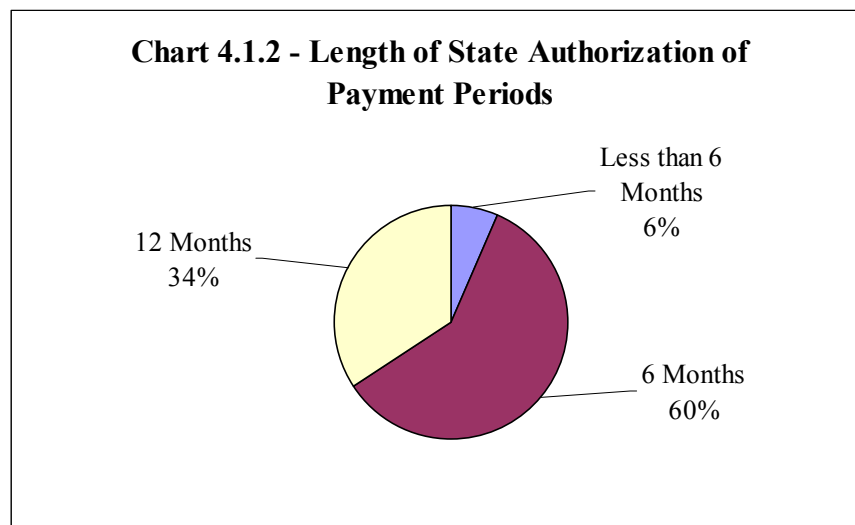
<sup>15</sup> For income-eligible families only; for other service groups, period varies.

<sup>16</sup> Varies by Workforce Development Area.

unearned income, employment, household composition or address. The parent must report a change in child care provider immediately.

- Sixteen States (AZ, CA,<sup>17</sup> DE,<sup>18</sup> HI,<sup>19</sup> IA, KS, KY, MD, MO, NJ, NY,<sup>20</sup> NC, OH, OK, PR, SC) generally authorize child care payments for up to 12 months.

In **Ohio**, the family's eligibility is redetermined at least every 12 months. Eligibility continues throughout each 12-month period and will only end under specified circumstances, such as if the family no longer needs the care, exceeds the income eligibility limit or if the parent is no longer employed or in an education/training program leading to employment. Eligibility may be terminated immediately for all families who are not OWF participants or in the transition period if funding is no longer available. Families that are OWF participants or in the transition period are prioritized and will be the last group terminated if funding is no longer available.



*Source:* Information compiled from State CCDF Plans, FFY 2002-2003.

- **Oregon** authorizes child care for a three- to six-month period, depending upon the benefit program and the stability of a family's income. A six- to 12-month authorization period is used for targeted services families.
- **Alaska** authorizes child care for a three- to four-month period, but reviews eligibility every six months for families with documented stable work and child care situations.

<sup>17</sup> Protective Services placements, six months.

<sup>18</sup> Up to six months depending upon the parent/caretaker's circumstances for teen parents, special needs caretaker or child, or homeless families.

<sup>19</sup> Hawaii reported a 12-month eligibility period with monthly verification.

<sup>20</sup> Reassessed quarterly for TANF families.



- **North Dakota** authorizes child care for one month. The State has launched an extended eligibility pilot program in two counties, which may authorize payment for child care services for up to 12 months.
- Eight States (CO, DC, IL, MD, NV, OR, SD, VT) reported extended periods of eligibility for families whose children are enrolled in collaborative Head Start–child care programs.

**Colorado** counties with Head Start programs may accept the Head Start application in lieu of the low-income child care application for those children enrolled in the Head Start program. In addition, Head Start eligibility and redetermination criteria may be applied to dually eligible Head Start/Low-Income Child Care families. In some communities participating in the Consolidated Child Care Pilot Program, eligibility may be redetermined every 12 months where children are enrolled in Head Start and the pilot communities have received a waiver of the six-month eligibility redetermination from the State Division of Child Care.

In the **District of Columbia**, where generally a six-month authorization period prevails, a child enrolled in prekindergarten who is eligible for subsidized child care will retain eligibility for the duration of the school year. A child enrolled in Head Start who is eligible for subsidized child care retains eligibility until such a time as the Head Start eligibility limit is reached.

In most cases in **Illinois**, eligibility is determined for six months when a client applies, and thereafter at the end of each six-month period, eligibility is redetermined. However, for families enrolled in the Partners in Care and Education Program, eligibility is determined once a year at the beginning of the program year.

#### **Alignment of Eligibility Policies Favors Collaboration Efforts**

Increasingly, States and communities are promoting collaboration among early childhood programs such as Head Start, prekindergarten, and child care. To support families enrolled in full-day, full-year early care and learning programs, more and more Lead Agencies are simplifying the eligibility determination process and lengthening the child care subsidy authorization period.

The maximum eligibility period is 12 months in **Maryland**; however, the eligibility period can be extended beyond 12 months if the Head Start program's school year extends beyond the family's eligibility period.

In **Nevada**, the Early Head Start programs determine a family's eligibility when the child enters the program. The child care program providing wrap-around funding accepts that determination. A family's eligibility is not redetermined until that

child enters Head Start; the child care program providing wrap-around funding accepts that determination. Once the child leaves Head Start and enters regular child care through the certificate program, the family's eligibility is redetermined every six months and more often if the family's income is unstable.

The length of client eligibility varies in **Oregon** depending on the benefit program and stability of family income. Redetermination of client eligibility is required periodically, generally three to six months. If the child is enrolled in a Head Start collaboration program, eligibility may extend to the end of the State fiscal year.

In the upcoming months, **South Dakota** applicants will be able to complete and submit applications online through the Child Care Services Web site. The eligibility level is locked in for a period of six months as long as all program requirements are maintained. Eligibility is locked in for a period of one year for applicants utilizing programs offering full-day full-year Head Start as part of a collaboration effort between the child care provider, Head Start, and Child Care Services.

In **Vermont**, for families that are participating in full-day/full-year contracts with Head Start, eligibility is determined annually rather than every six months.

- When funding is not available to purchase care, six States (CA, DE, MA, MN, PA, VA) reported maintaining a waiting list of eligible families.

When a **California** family contacts a subsidized child care and development program either in person or by telephone, the family is asked a series of questions to determine for which, if any, subsidized child care programs the family may be eligible. Based on the information provided, if the family is eligible and space is available, the family is enrolled. If no space is available, the family is placed on an eligibility waiting list and enrolled in the order of priorities for enrollment as space becomes available. A family's enrollment is subject to completion of an application, including verification of income and need. In the case of CalWORKs (California's TANF Program) families, funding is available to provide immediate services without waiting.

The application process for TANF recipients and non-TANF recipients for child care assistance is the same in **Minnesota**. Families apply for child care assistance in their county of residence. Each county must have at least two methods for applying for Child Care Assistance. If the applicant is a TANF recipient, or a non-TANF recipient and funds are available at the time of inquiry, then an application is completed; the county determines if the applicant is eligible; and, if eligible, services begin. If the applicant is a non-TANF recipient and funds are not available, the family's name is put on a waiting list for assistance. As additional funds become available, families on waiting lists are notified and requested to complete applications.

In **Pennsylvania**, if funding is available, a child receives service as soon as eligibility is determined. If funding is not available, the child's name is placed on a waiting list. When funding becomes available, the child's parent is notified and must select a provider. Families moving from TANF into the subsidized child care program do not go on a waiting list. Instead cases are automatically transferred to the Child Care Information Services agency, which has a 90-day window to complete the paperwork for eligibility. This transition period is allowed to ensure that there is no disruption in service for former TANF families.

## Section 4.2 – State Records of Substantiated Complaints by Parents

*The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))*

Every Lead Agency has established a procedure for maintaining records of substantiated parental complaints. In most States, records of substantiated complaints are maintained by the Lead Agency's licensing unit and are available to the public upon request at the State agency's main office or county and local offices of the agency and its designee, usually in accordance with the State's open records law. Some States have developed automated systems to maintain these records and a few have made some information concerning complaints or licensing status available on the Internet. Many States have established toll-free numbers where information can be requested—or complaints filed—verbally. Table 4.2 on page 116 summarizes the methods States use to record substantiated parental complaints.

- Eight States (CO, MA, MO, NE, NY, TX, WA, WV) reported that they use an automated system to track parental complaints. **North Dakota** reported that it anticipates launching an automated system in January 2003.
- Ten Lead Agencies (IL, MS, NE, NY, NC, PA, SC, VT, VA, WA) reported that they have established a toll-free number to make it easier for parents to register complaints and/or to request information on a provider's compliance history.
- Three States (IN, NC, OH) reported that they currently allow parents to request and/or receive complaint information via the Internet.

Complaints on licensed providers in **Colorado** are retained in the Division of Child Care imaging system, which contains the files of all licensed child care facilities. The public has access to this information in the electronic licensing histories maintained for all facilities, which can be distributed to local child care resource and referral agencies. These histories contain information on all licensing functions.

If a parent or an individual calls the **District of Columbia** Department of Health Licensing Agency and inquires about the number of complaints at a particular child care facility, the information is given over the phone. If a caller requests the details of the complaint, s/he will receive a copy with the names of the children involved deleted.

Currently, the CCR&Rs in **Idaho** are required to maintain a parental complaint log. Each CCR&R has developed its own procedures. The State plans to implement the procedures used in one region Statewide. The requirement is being incorporated in the new CCR&R contracts.

The public can access information on the **Indiana** Family and Social Services Administration Web site (<http://www.carefinderindiana.org>) concerning the status of a child care provider's license, and read about the latest inspections and any problems uncovered. Complaints filed by parents are also listed, along with whether the complaint was substantiated, and what action was taken.

For **Kentucky** child care providers not required to be licensed or certified, parents may request a self-assessment form from the Cabinet for Families and Children.

In **North Carolina**, in addition to information on complaints that are investigated, parents can gain access to information on child care provider's compliance with licensing requirements. Files are maintained in the Division of Child Development office on each licensed center and home. Parents may view the records by visiting the office or may request a copy via e-mail or a toll-free phone number. Parents can also access some information from the records online through the Division's new Facility Search Site (<http://www.ncchildcare.net>). The new rated license system provides additional information about each individual provider's compliance history. The license shows the number of points that the provider has earned for its compliance with licensing rules.

The **Ohio** Department of Job and Family Services maintains a Web site offering access to information regarding the number of complaints filed against each center licensed by the State. This information is limited to whether complaints have been filed.

<b>TABLE 4.2 – SELECTED METHODS USED TO REPORT SUBSTANTIATED PARENTAL COMPLAINTS</b>			
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>States Reporting 2000-2001 Plans</b>	<b>States Reporting 2002-2003 Plans</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Use an Automated System to Record Complaints</b>	8	8	No change
<b>Use a Toll-free Number to Register Complaints or Request Information</b>	7	11	+ 4
<b>Use the Internet to Allow Parents to Request or Receive Complaint Information</b>	2	3	+ 1

*Source:* Information compiled from State CCDF Plans, FFY 2002-2003.

### **Section 4.3 – Affording Parents Unlimited Access to their Children in Care**

*The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))*

As required, each Lead Agency has taken steps to ensure that parents have unlimited access to their children while they are in the care of a provider who receives funds through the Child

Care and Development Fund. Lead Agencies give ready access to regulations and statutes and inform parents of their right to unlimited access as part of the consumer education they receive.

#### **Section 4.4 – TANF Terminology**

*The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.*

*In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:*

- *“appropriate child care”*
- *“reasonable distance”*
- *“unsuitability of informal child care”*
- *“affordable child care arrangements”*

The TANF terminology submitted as part of each State’s CCDF Plan is available from the National Child Care Information Center at 800-616-2242 and on the Web at <http://nccic.org>.